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RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Letter dated 18 April 1996 from the Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Angola to the United Nations Office at
Geneva addressed to the Chairman of the fifty-second session
of the Commission on Human Rights

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Angola to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other international organizations in Switzerland presents its compliments to the Chairman of the fifty-second session of the Commission on Human Rights and has the honour to transmit the following text* to him for distribution as an official document of the Commission on Human Rights.

(Signed) Adriano PARREIRA
Permanent Representative

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A N N E X

PERMANENT MISSION OF ANGOLA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
IN GENEVA

Please allow me to refer to the Report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, for this 52nd Session of the Commission on Human Rights. My delegation shares with the Special Rapporteur, and certainly with all other Members of the Commission, her fully justified preoccupations made explicit in her report (E/CN.4/1996/100) concerning maltreatment, exploitation, negligent treatment, prostitution and sexual abuse of children all over the world.

I would like, on behalf of the angolan delegation, to draw the attention of the Members of this Commission, as well as of the Observers, intergovernmental and non governmental organizations, to the growing numbers of prostitution and sexual abuse implicating children in Africa.

Although we esteem that the report did contribute, in general terms, for a better preception of child prostitution in some regions of the world, we regret that it did not expose enough this specific situation in the african continent. This is very unfortunate if we assume that more and more international observers are unanimous in considering an increasing number of agents who, in an organized and systematic way, promote child pornography, child prostitution, sexual abuse and other preverse forms of exploitation of children in Africa.

As it is stated in the report, the determinant factors contributing to the spreading of prostitution and all forms of child abuse, particularly in countries involved in internal conflits, are related to underdevelopment and poverty as well as to degradating living conditions, shortage and often total absence of social structures of all types, illiteracy and misery, which constitute systematic human rights violations victimizing the absolute majority of the african populations all over the continent.

The angolan delegation has serious reasons to believe that african children, certainly the poorest and less protected in the world, constitute a considerable part of the 84 millions of children who were, in a way or another, victims of sexual abuse by the more than a half million paedophiles, acting allmost in absolute impunity, sometimes integrated in sex-tours which are advertised openly in their countries through the *mass media*, including the international electronic networks. These paedophiles do in fact take advantage of the miserable living conditions of street children in general, and particularly in Africa.

But sex tourism is only a more visible part of this most repulsive and disgusting activity. My delegation is worried about the preoccupations of the Special Rapporteur and of the Secretary general, made explicit in their reports, concening the behaviour of the UN forces engaged in peace keeping operations, which do not allways perform at the highest standart of conduct (E/CN.4/1996/110/Add.1).

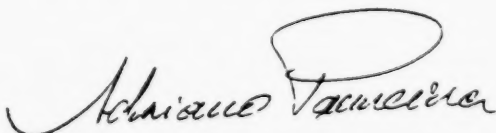
It is our most serious opinion that this Commission should take in consideration and submet to appreciation the association sugested by the Special Rapporteur (in relation to a specific country in south east Asia) between sudden growth in prostitution and the arrival of so called peace keeping troops. We strongly believe that this unfortunate reality may also be true for other countries, namely in Africa. The Commission sholud declare that situation as inadmissible and alarming, and take immediate and consistent action.

All Members of this Commission will certainly agree that the international community is not adequately responding to a worldwide deterioration and degradation of the rights of the child. In our opinion, under the intersessional period, the subsidiary bodies of this Commission should also give priority to the analysis of the reasons why fifty years of human rights activity seems so frustrating in regard to the protection of children against neglect, cruelty and exploitation. At the same time the right to development shoul be promoted, implemented and strengthed in Africa and in all poor regions of the world.

Although our Government is deeply committed with the imperatives of a global and complex peaceprocess, angolan authorities are more than eager to approach positively the very difficult situation of children in our country, in view to bring about a definitive rehabilitation of the rights of the child in Angola.

As a confirmation of our sincere commitment to the promotion, implementation and safeguarding of the human rights in Angola, it is my honnour to announce publically that in a letter adressed to the General Secretary of the United Nations, dated 13 February 1996, His Excellency President Dos Santos declared the readiness of the angolan Government, (wich requested technical cooperation and assistance of the Center for Human Rights and the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United Nations) to wellcome and organize the realization of a major Conference on Human Rights in Africa, expected to be attended at the highest level by all african nations, which Governments are warmly invited to participate, as well as by the representatives of the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizartions of the Continent.

Geneva, 19 April 1996



Professor Dr. Adriano Parreira
Ambassador Permanent Representative

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